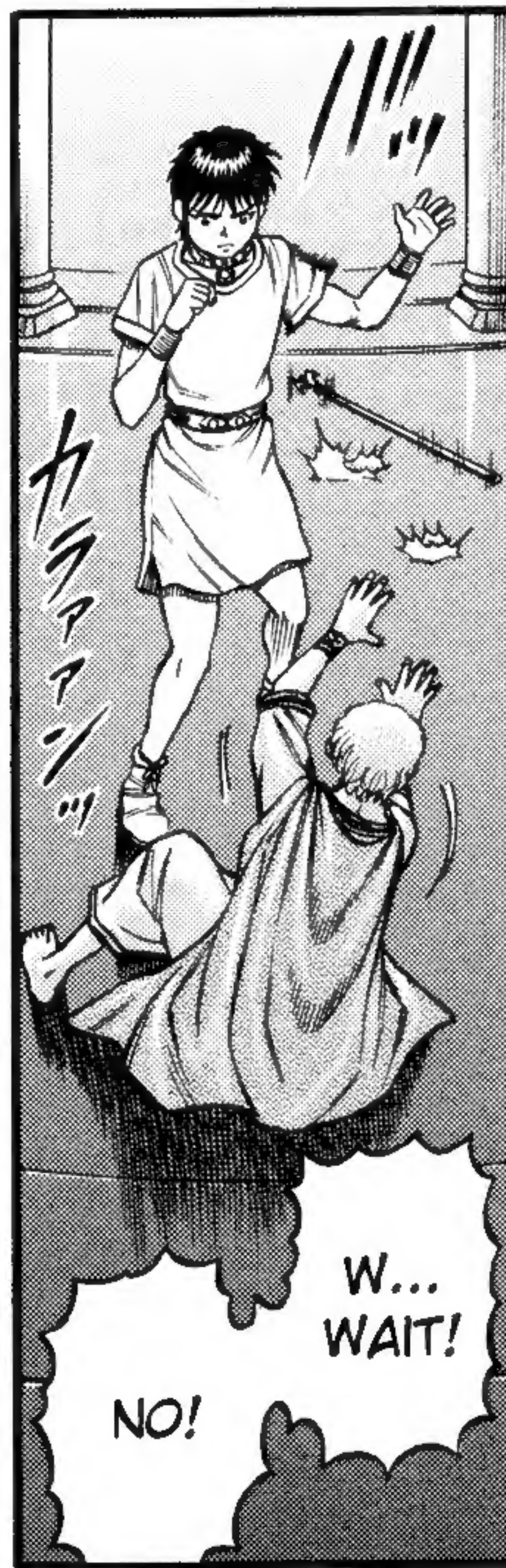
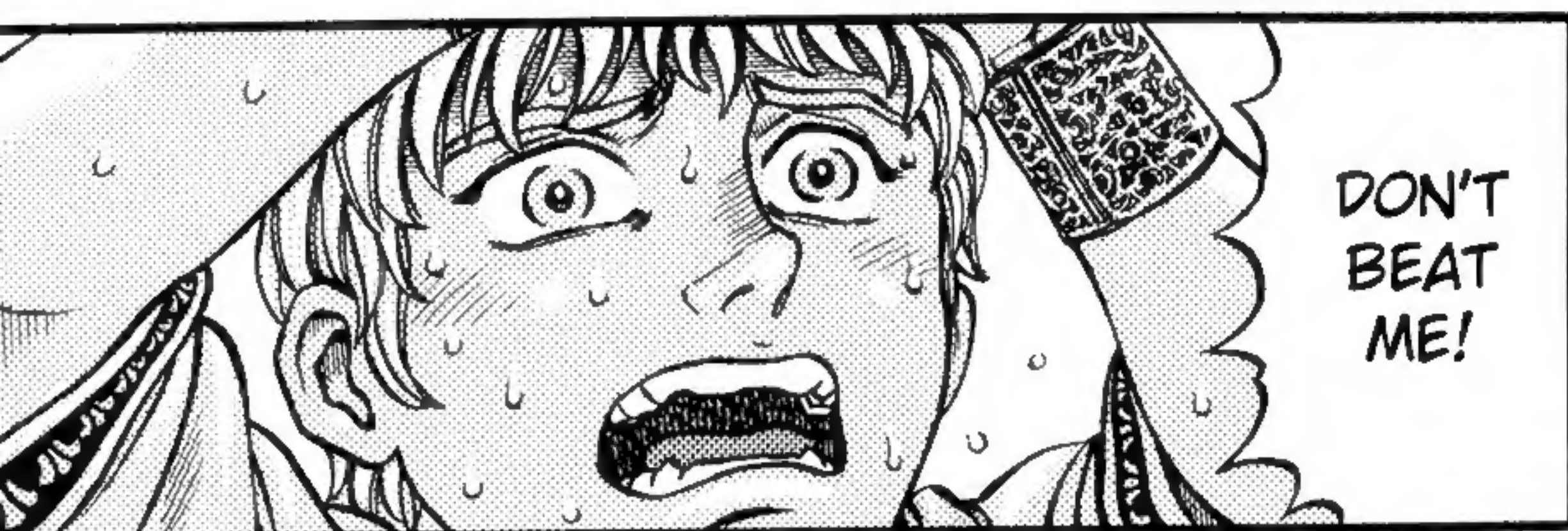






I'M NOT GOING
TO HIT YOU...

CHAPTER XXXVII: LINGERING IMAGE

TO STRIKE YOU
YOUR MAJESTY.

I NEVER
INTENDED...

WEREN'T
YOU THE ONE
WHO BOUGHT
ME?

EVEN IF I
HAD TRIED TO
ROAR OUT...

FETTERS ON HIS
LEGS WON'T BE
ENOUGH, BIND BOTH
OF HIS ARMS TOO!

WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
TO HIS
MAJESTY?!

BAS-
TARD!

NO, GET
OFF ME!

ARE YOU
INJURED?

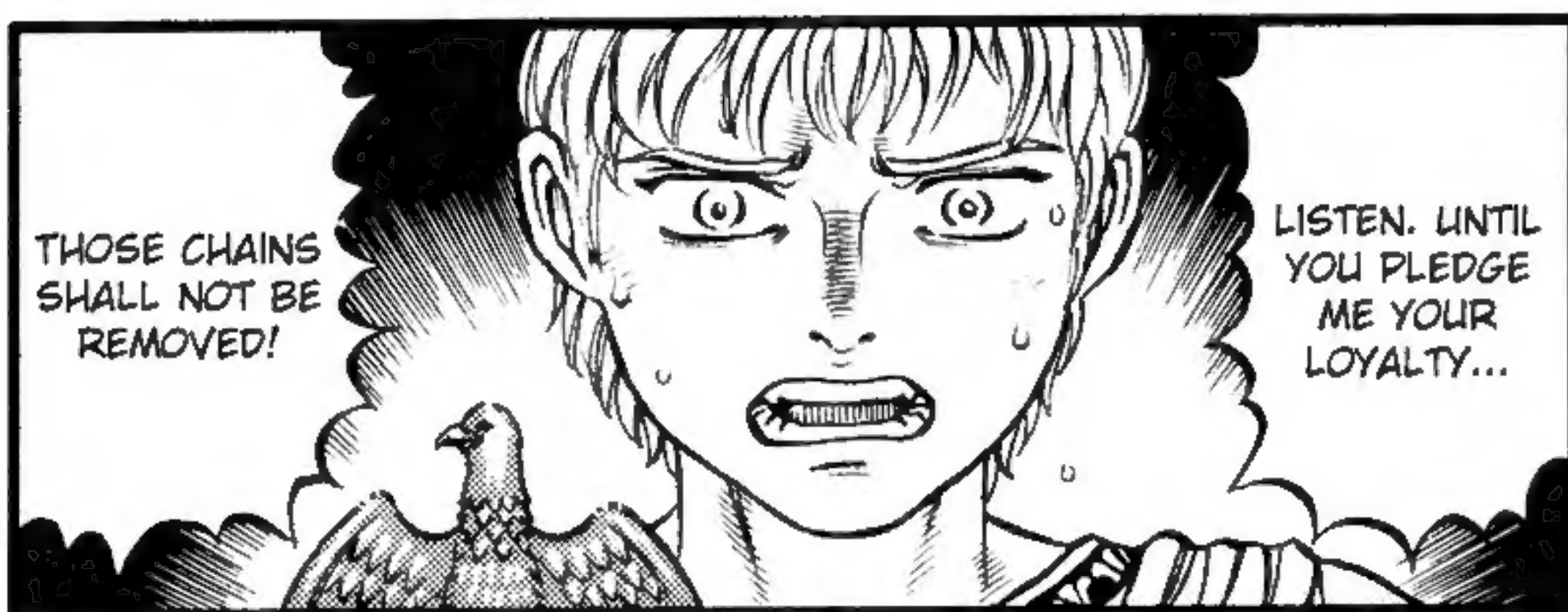
YOUR
MAJE-
STY!

PUT HIM IN
CHAINS THEN
GIVE ME A ROD!

THIS ONE
SHOWED AN
UNTHINKABLE
INGRATITUDE!

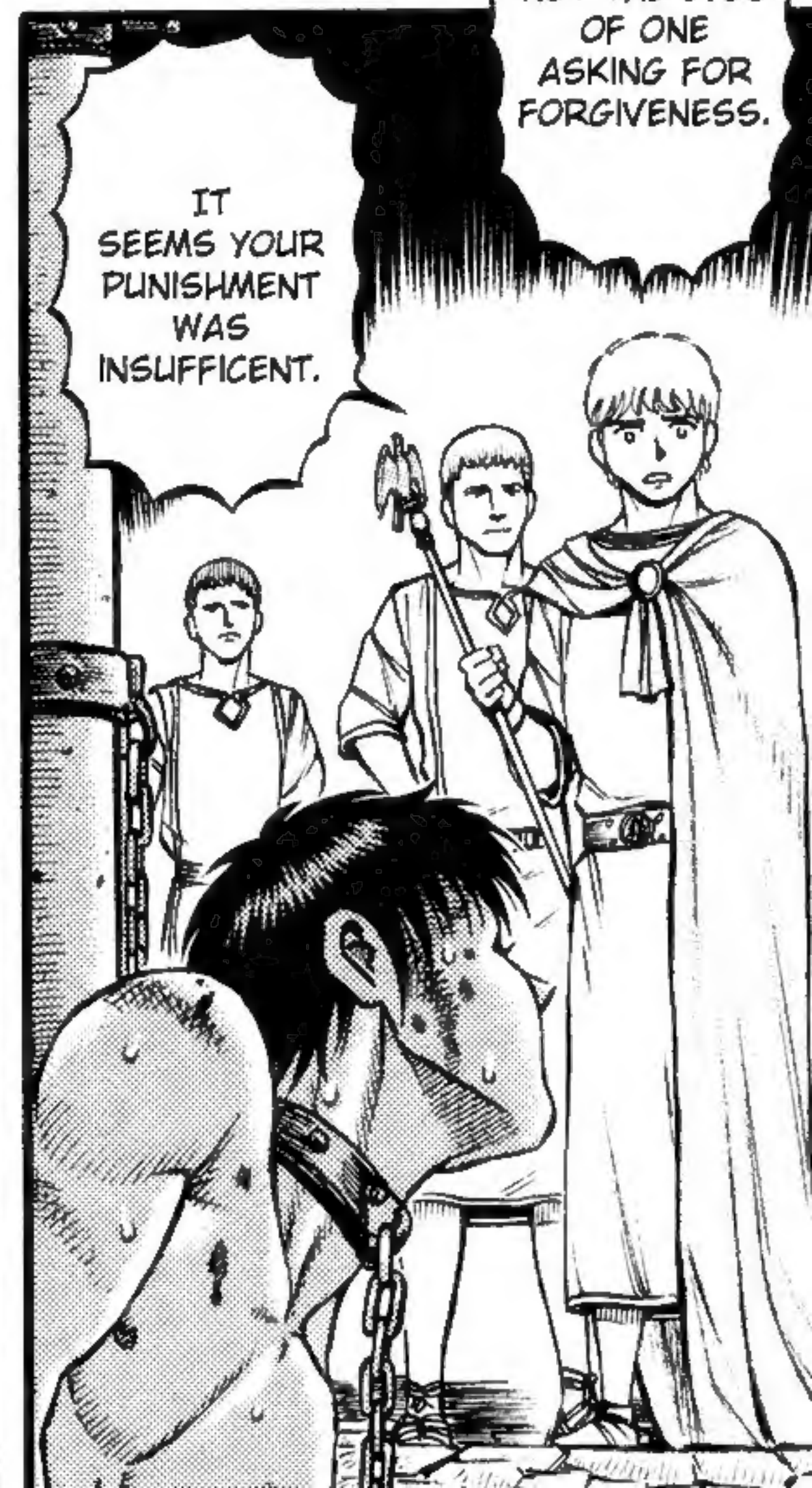


THOSE ARE
NOT THE EYES
OF ONE
ASKING FOR
FORGIVENESS.



THOSE CHAINS
SHALL NOT BE
REMOVED!

LISTEN. UNTIL
YOU PLEDGE
ME YOUR
LOYALTY...



IT
SEEMS YOUR
PUNISHMENT
WAS
INSUFFICIENT.



YOU NO
GOOD
FOOL!

I'LL LET
YOU MULL
OVER IT
FOR THE
NIGHT.

WHAT ON
EARTH HAS
COME OVER
YOU?

♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ...

MY LORD
NERO...

IT'S
BIZARRE...

WHY DO I
ALONE...



♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ...

HAVE TO
SUFFER
THIS?

YOU
SHOULDN'T BE
AFRAID OF
ANYTHING...



WHAT'S
FRIGHTENED
YOU?

THAT
FEAR YOU
SHOWED...



JUST
WHERE
ARE YOU...
MASTER...?!



IT'S MUCH
BETTER TO
JUST BE
PUNCHED IN
A FIGHT...

MASTER...



FAMILIAR.



IT'S
STRANGELY...



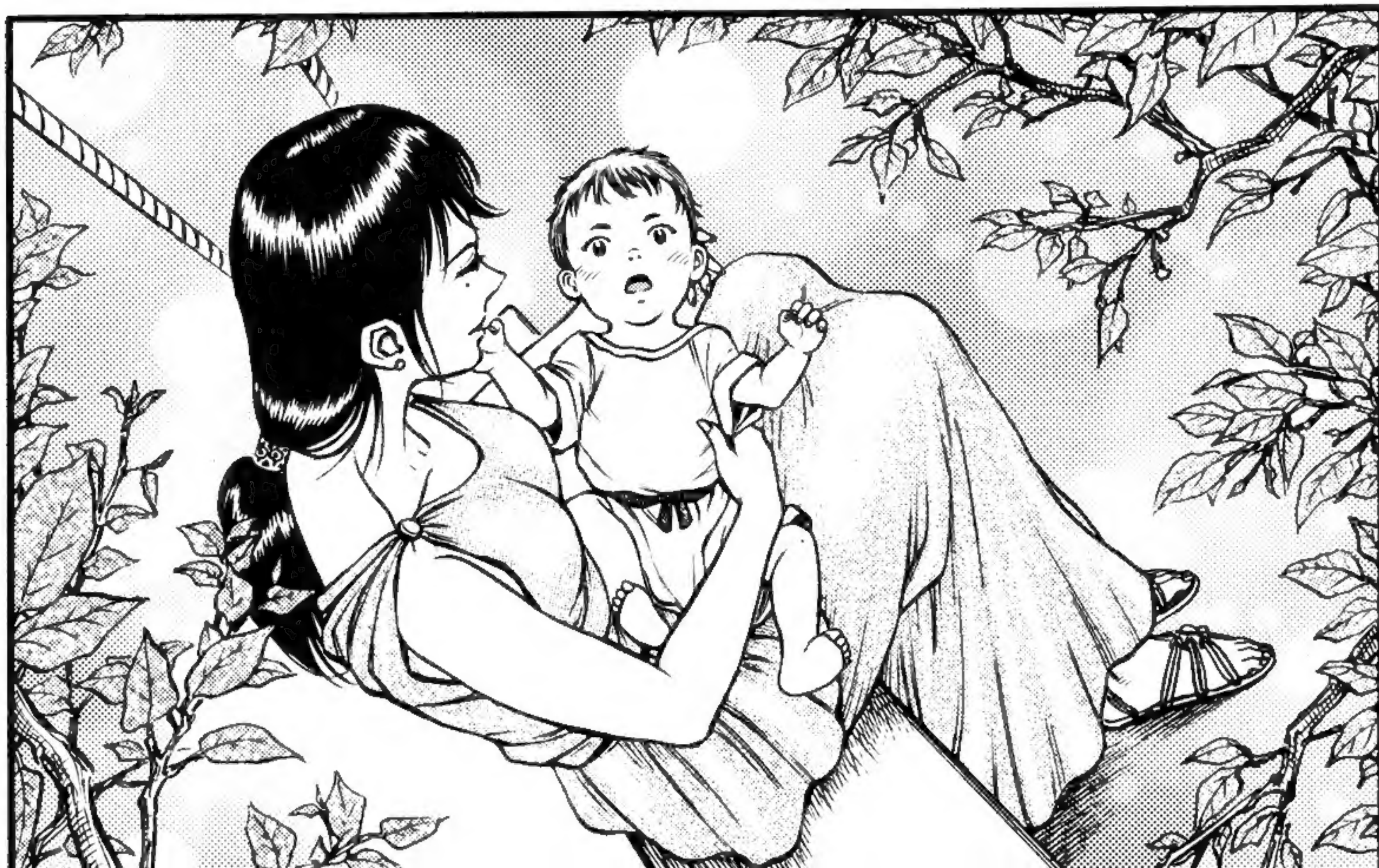
WHAT'S
THIS?



SUNLIGHT...



AH...





YOU...

ARE...

MY...

MOTHER?



ABOUT MYSELF
MOTHER!

WAIT!



THERE'S NO
MISTAKING
IT!

YES, YES! I'M
SURE OF IT...



I DON'T
KNOW A
THING...

I DON'T
KNOW
ONE
SINGLE
THING...

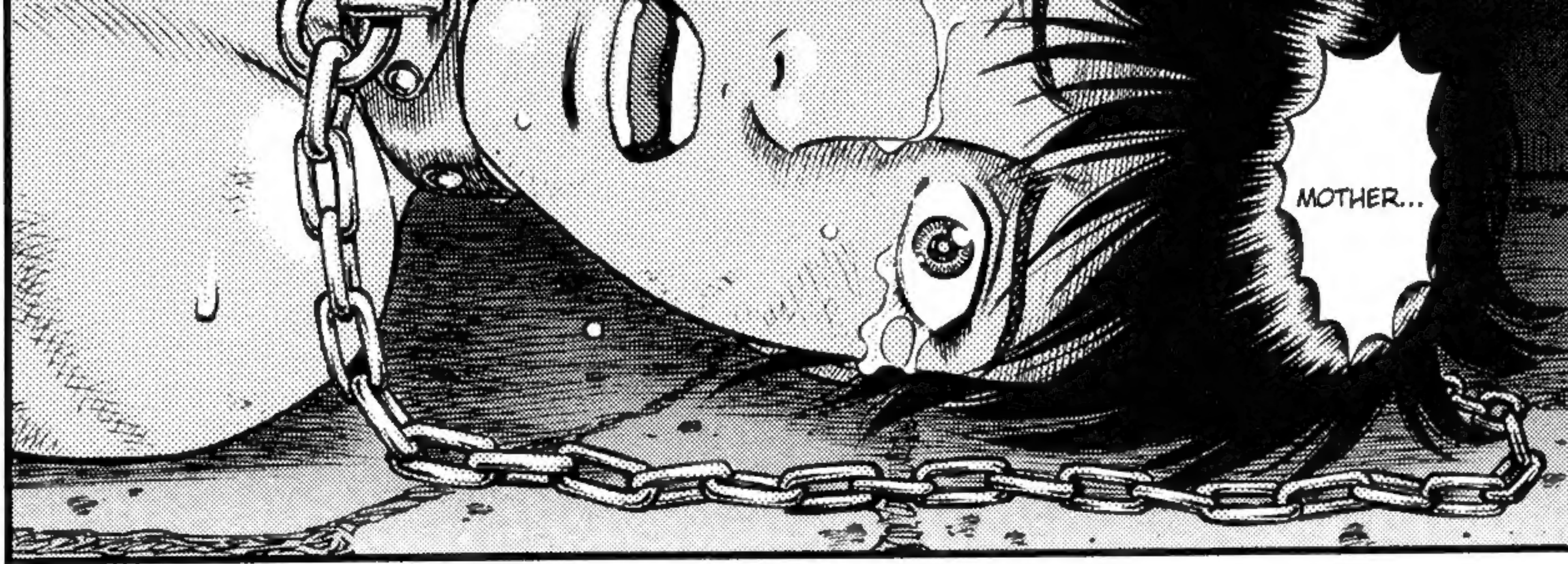


WHAT IS
MY REAL
NAME?



JUST WHO ARE
YOU THOUGH?

WHO IS MY
FATHER?





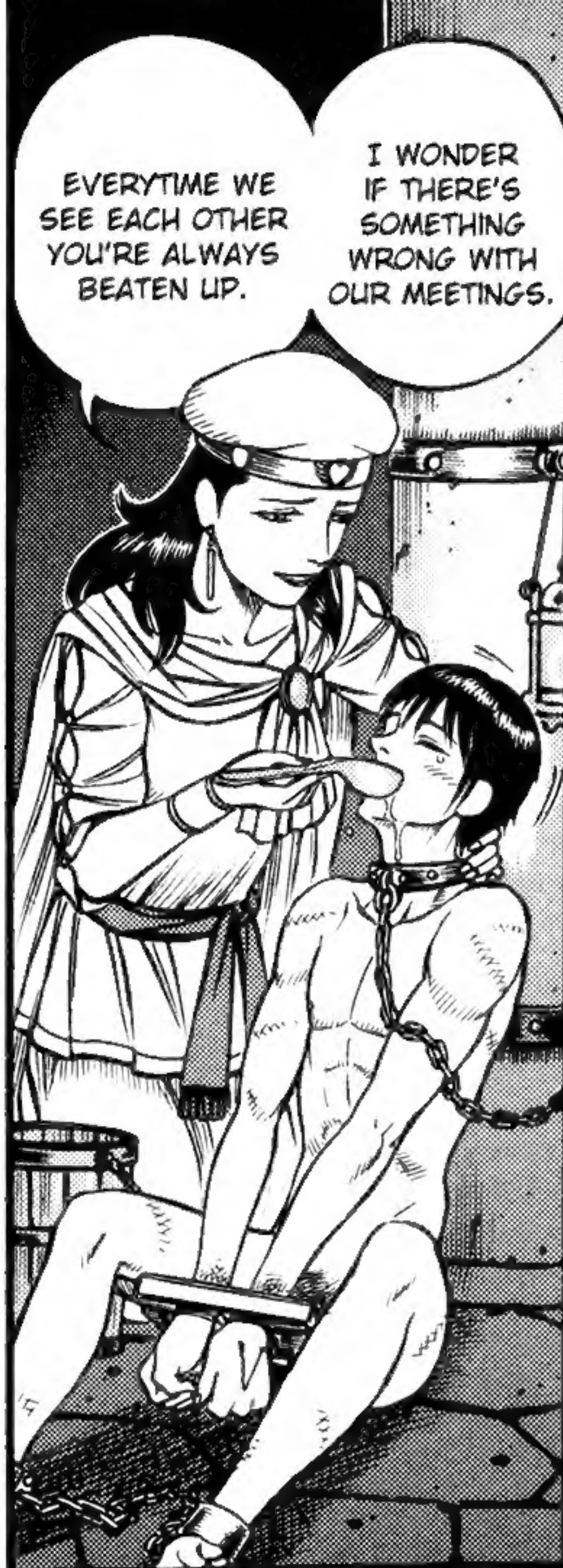
IT'S FINE,
JUST COME
WITH ME.

BUT, MY
LORD
NERO...



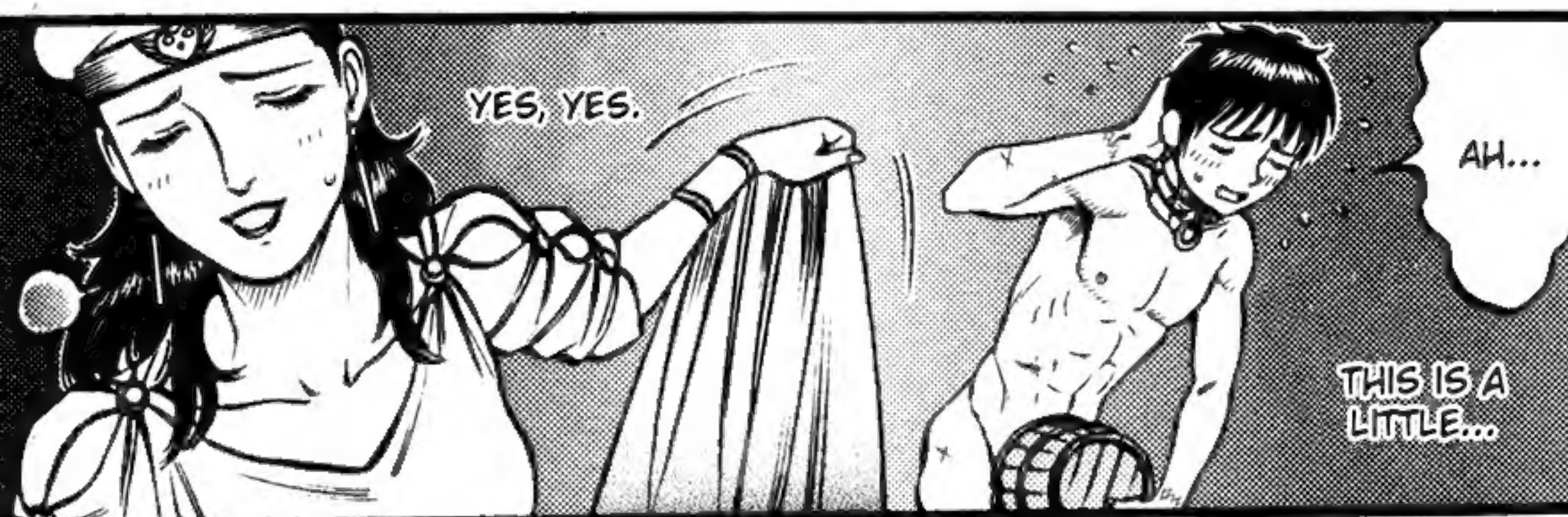
CAN YOU
WALK?

I'VE SECRETLY
COME TO HELP
YOU THOUGH.



EVERYTIME WE
SEE EACH OTHER
YOU'RE ALWAYS
BEATEN UP.

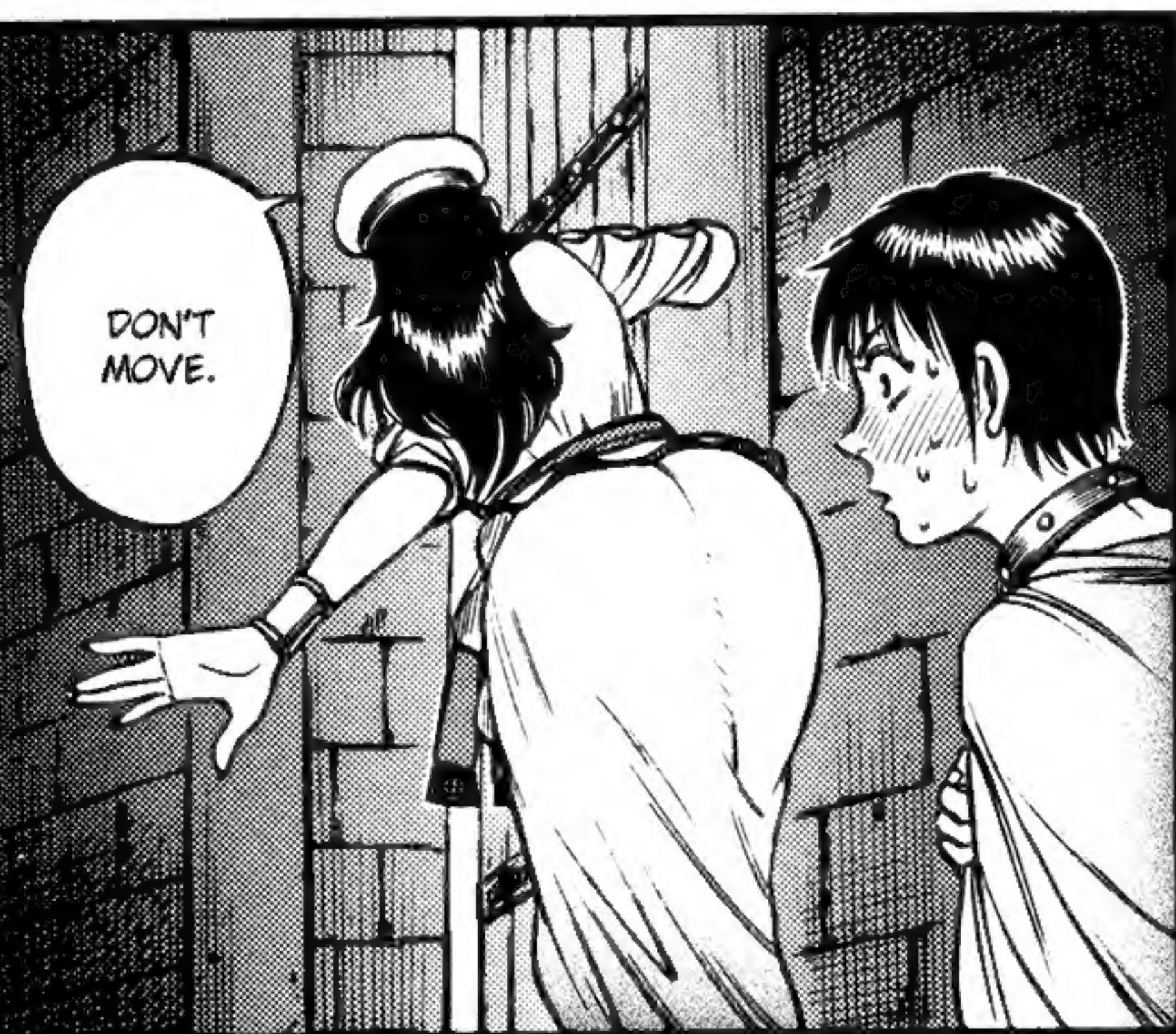
I WONDER
IF THERE'S
SOMETHING
WRONG WITH
OUR MEETINGS.



YES, YES.

AH...

THIS IS A
LITTLE...



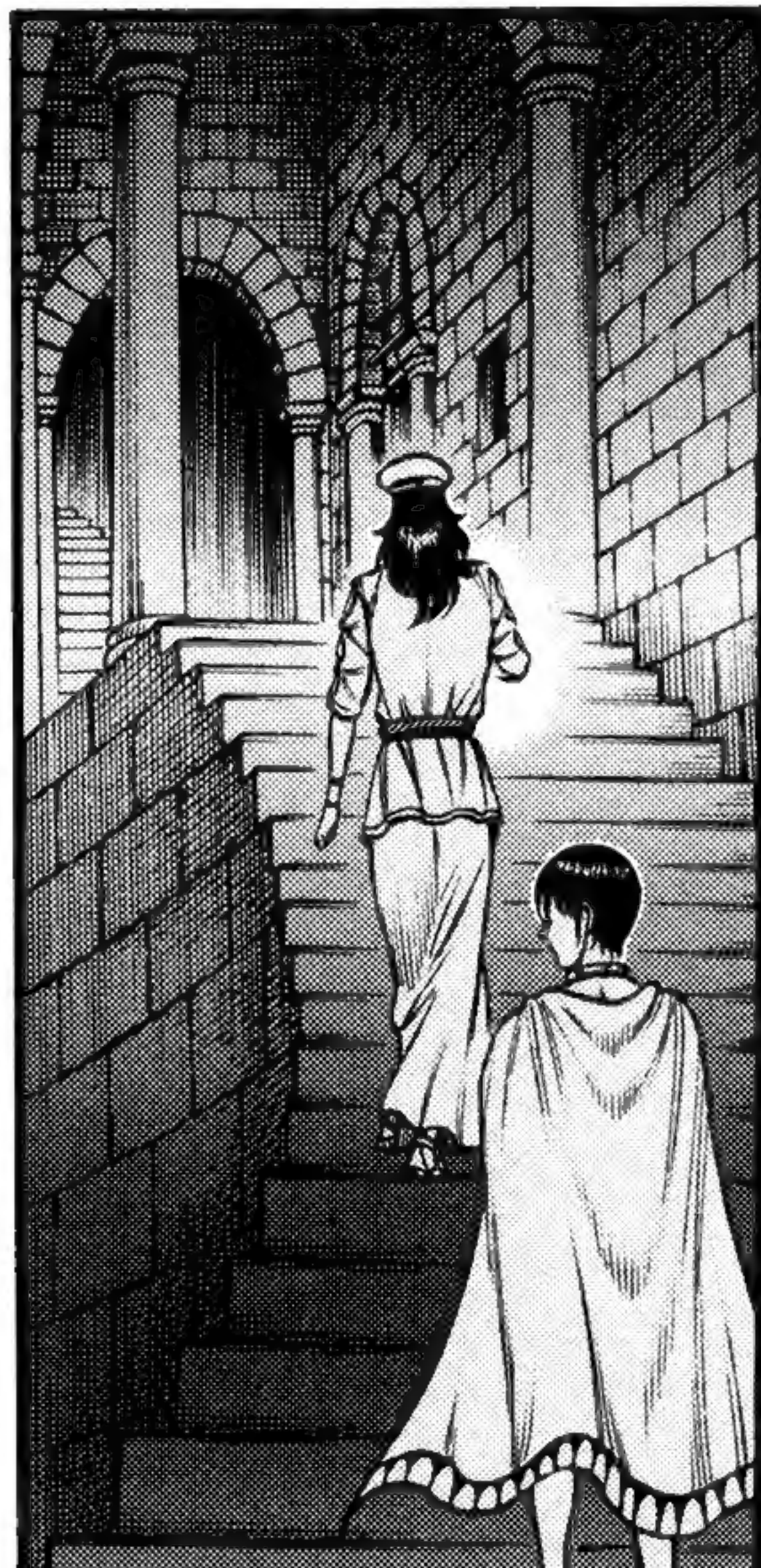
DON'T
MOVE.



LOV



IT CAN'T BE
THAT THEY'VE
NOTICED ME?!





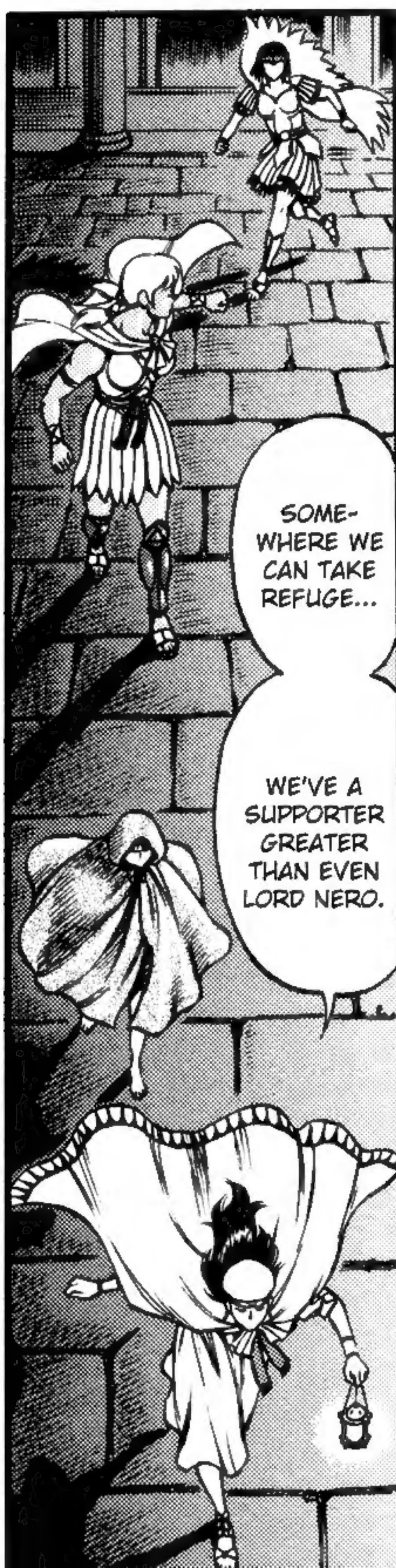
THEY'RE
RATHER LOW
ON GUARDS AT
PRESENT.

YOU
NEEDN'T
WORRY
MA'AM.

CASSANDRA!

EDDA!

HOW SLY
OF YOU.



SOME-
WHERE WE
CAN TAKE
REFUGE...

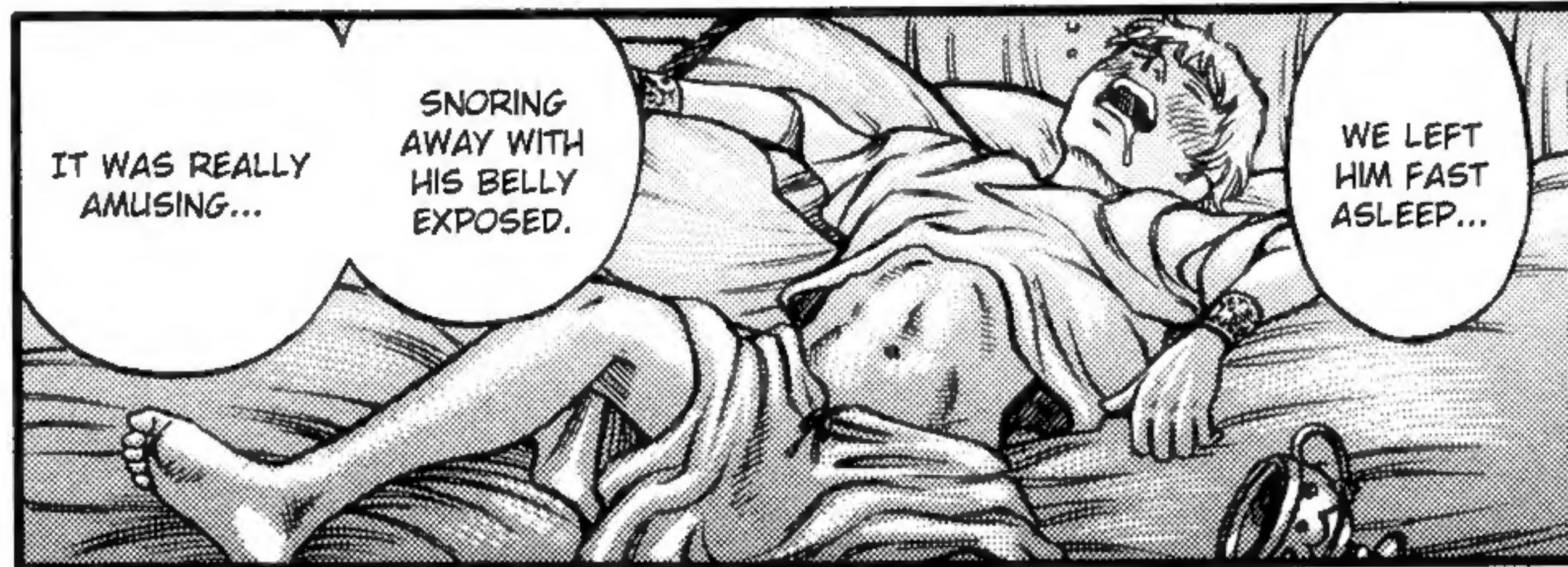
WE'VE A
SUPPORTER
GREATER
THAN EVEN
LORD NERO.



AND
IS NOW
SLEEPING
LIKE A
BABY.

HE
FINISHED
DRINKING
RATHER
HEAVILY...

AND HIS
MAJESTY
NERO?



IT WAS REALLY
AMUSING...

SNORING
AWAY WITH
HIS BELLY
EXPOSED.

WE LEFT
HIM FAST
ASLEEP...



LOCK IT
UP AS IT
WAS
BEFORE.

BUT
WHERE
ARE WE
GOING?

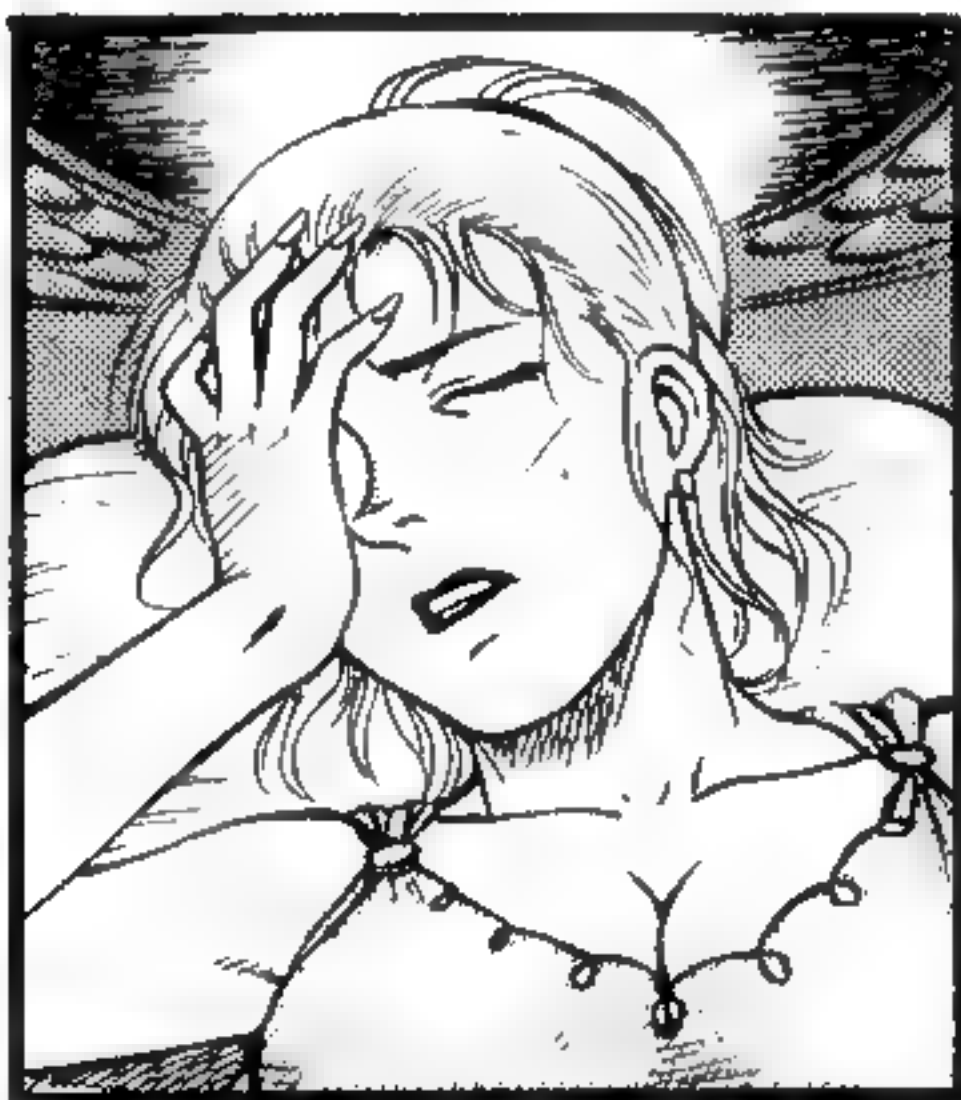
QUICKLY
NOW!



YOU'RE
BEING
TOO INDI-
SCREET
EDDA!

くらび



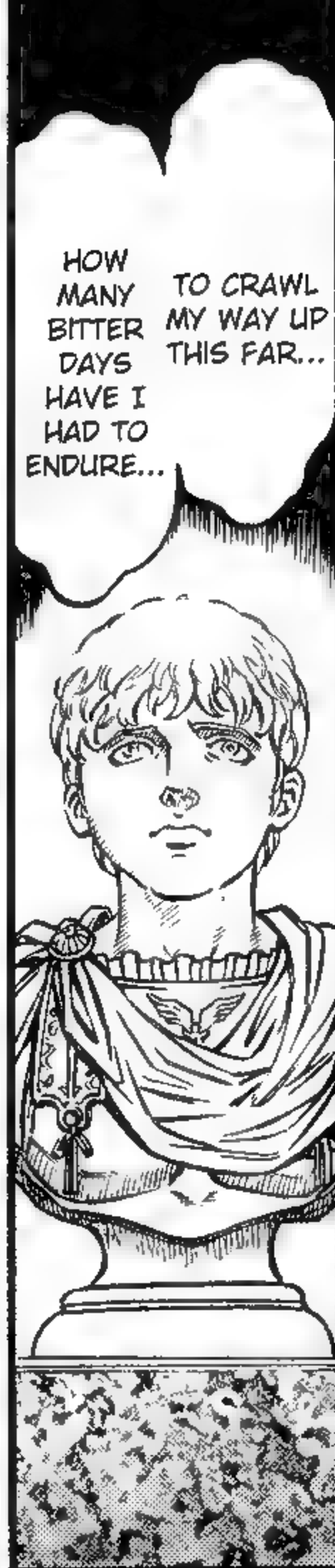




CAN ONLY
RUN
AWAY...

AND
YET...

THAT
BOY...



HOW
MANY
BITTER
DAYS
HAVE I
HAD TO
ENDURE...
TO CRAWL
MY WAY UP
THIS FAR...



NERO IS...

NOT
BECOMING A
FINE EMPEROR.

IT
TROU-
BLES
ME.

FOR HIM
TO BE A
RESPECTED
STATES-
MEN...



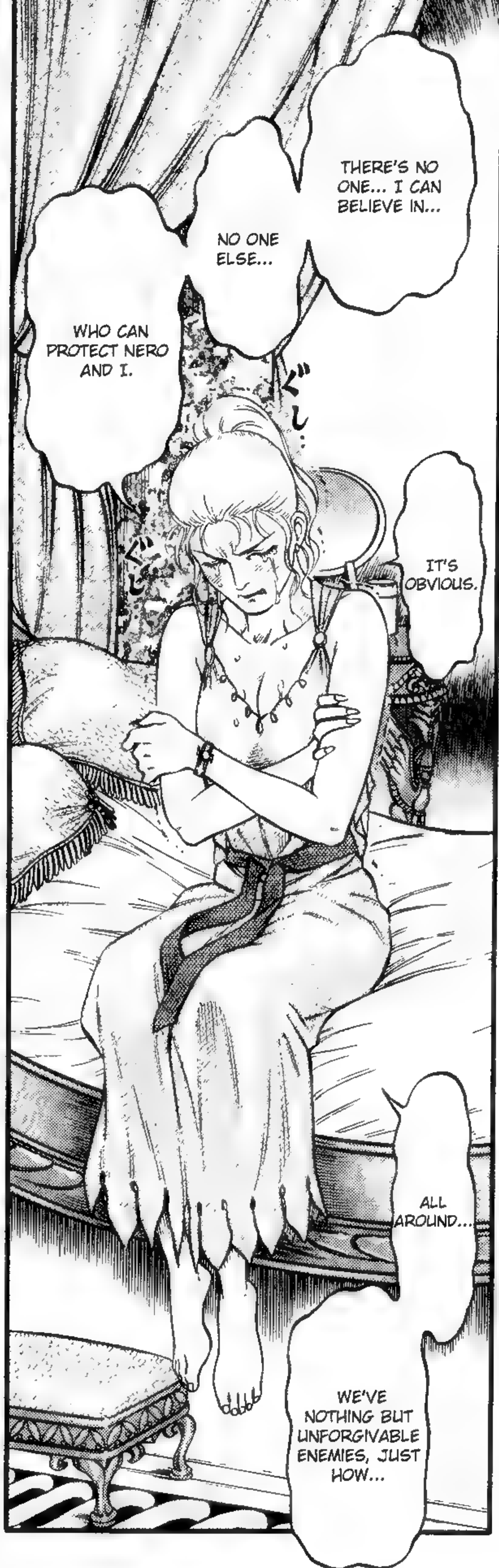
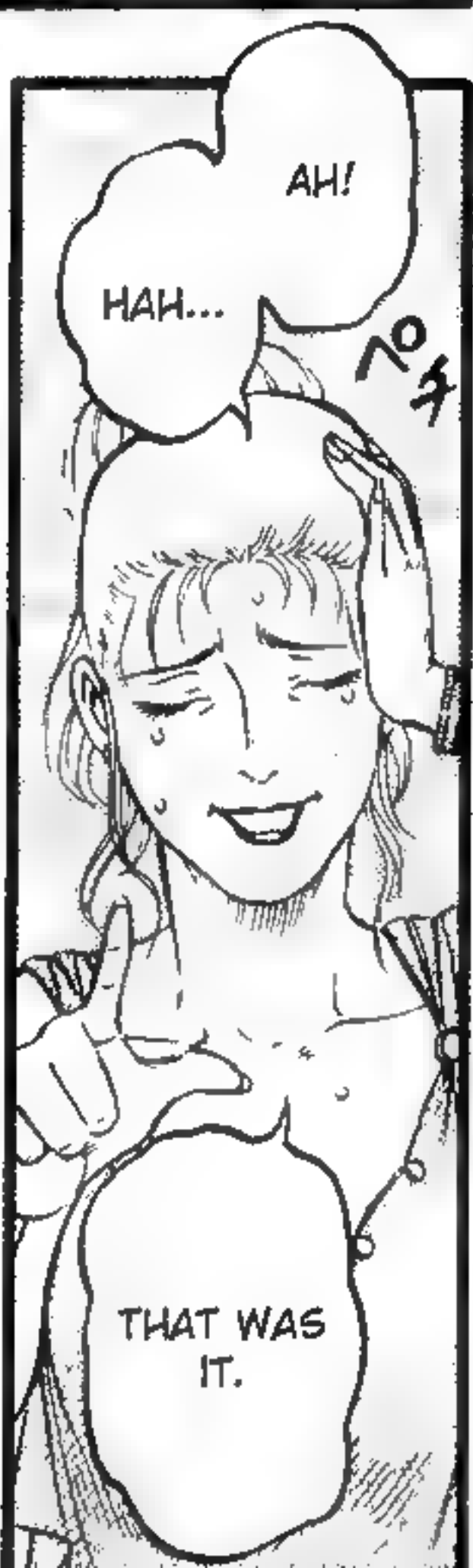
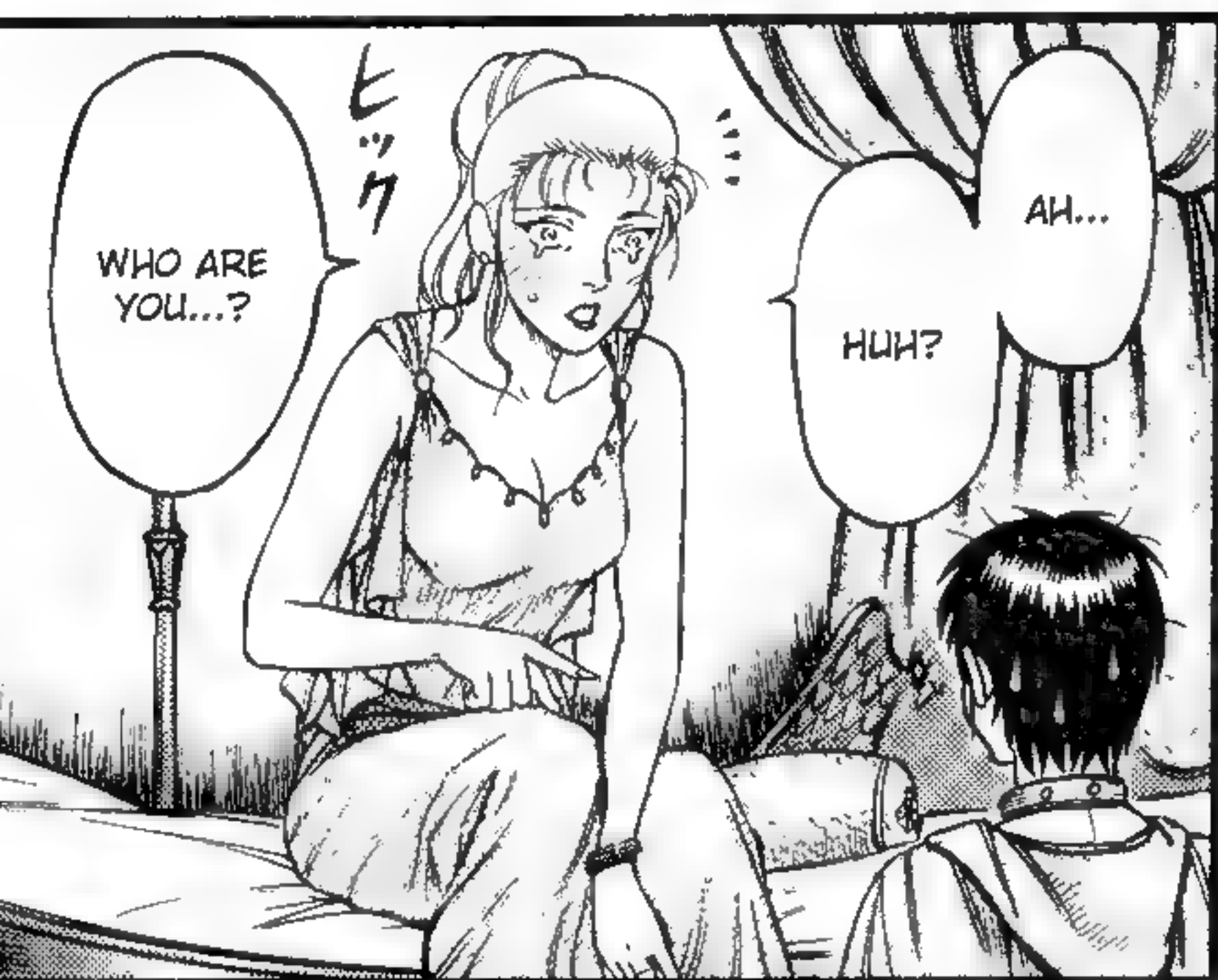
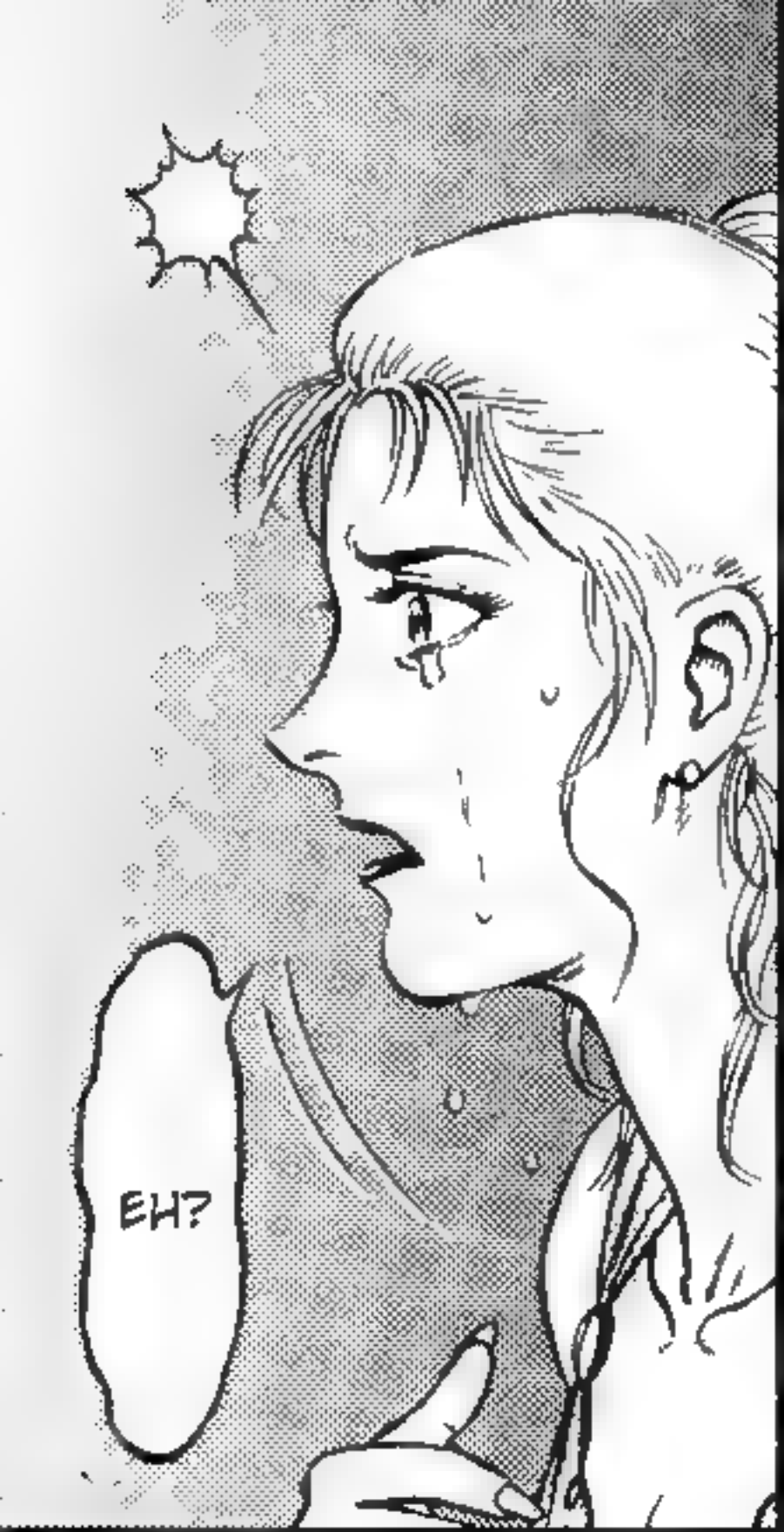
HIS DISPOSITION
MIGHT JUST BE
TOO FRAIL...

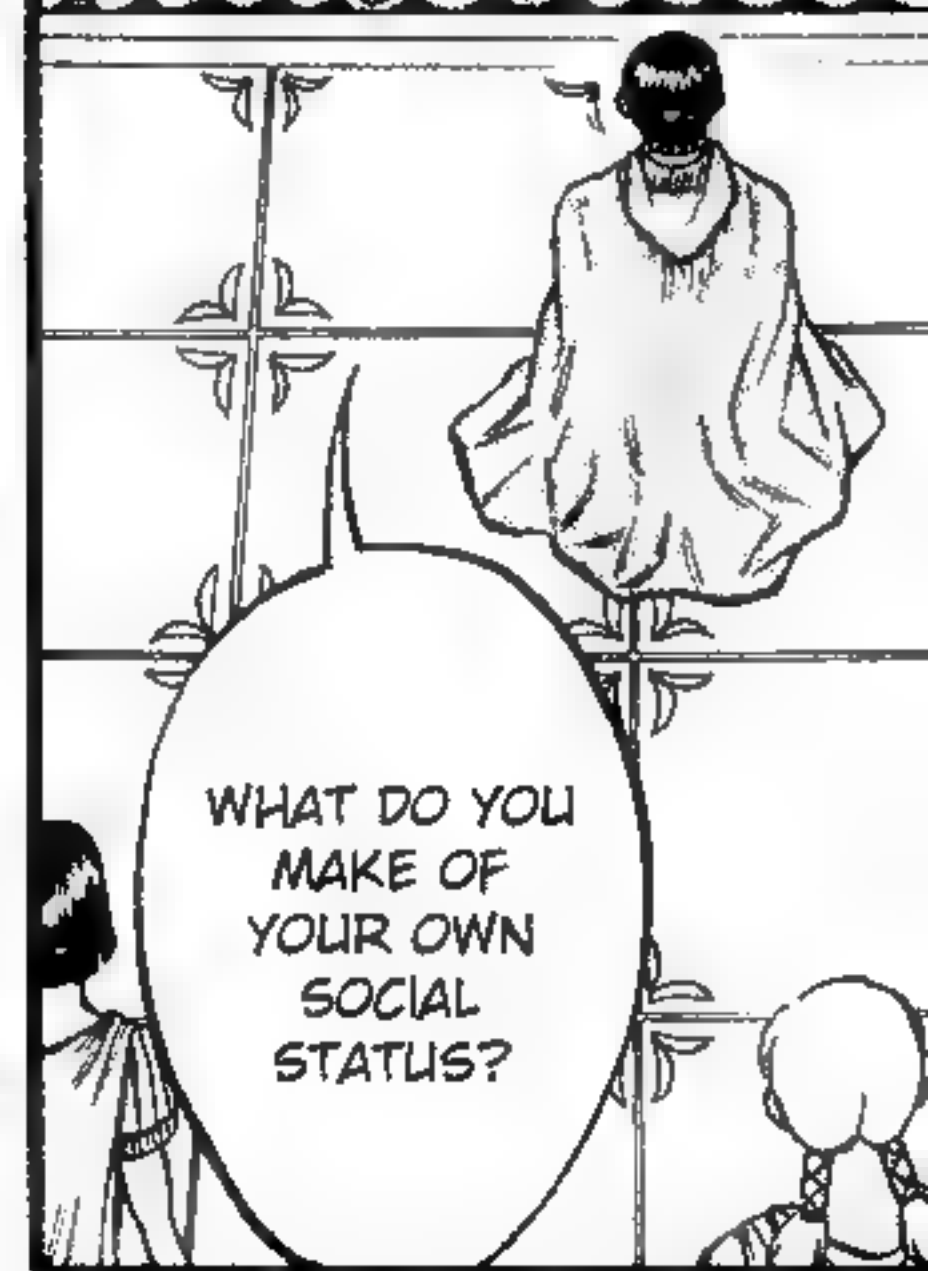
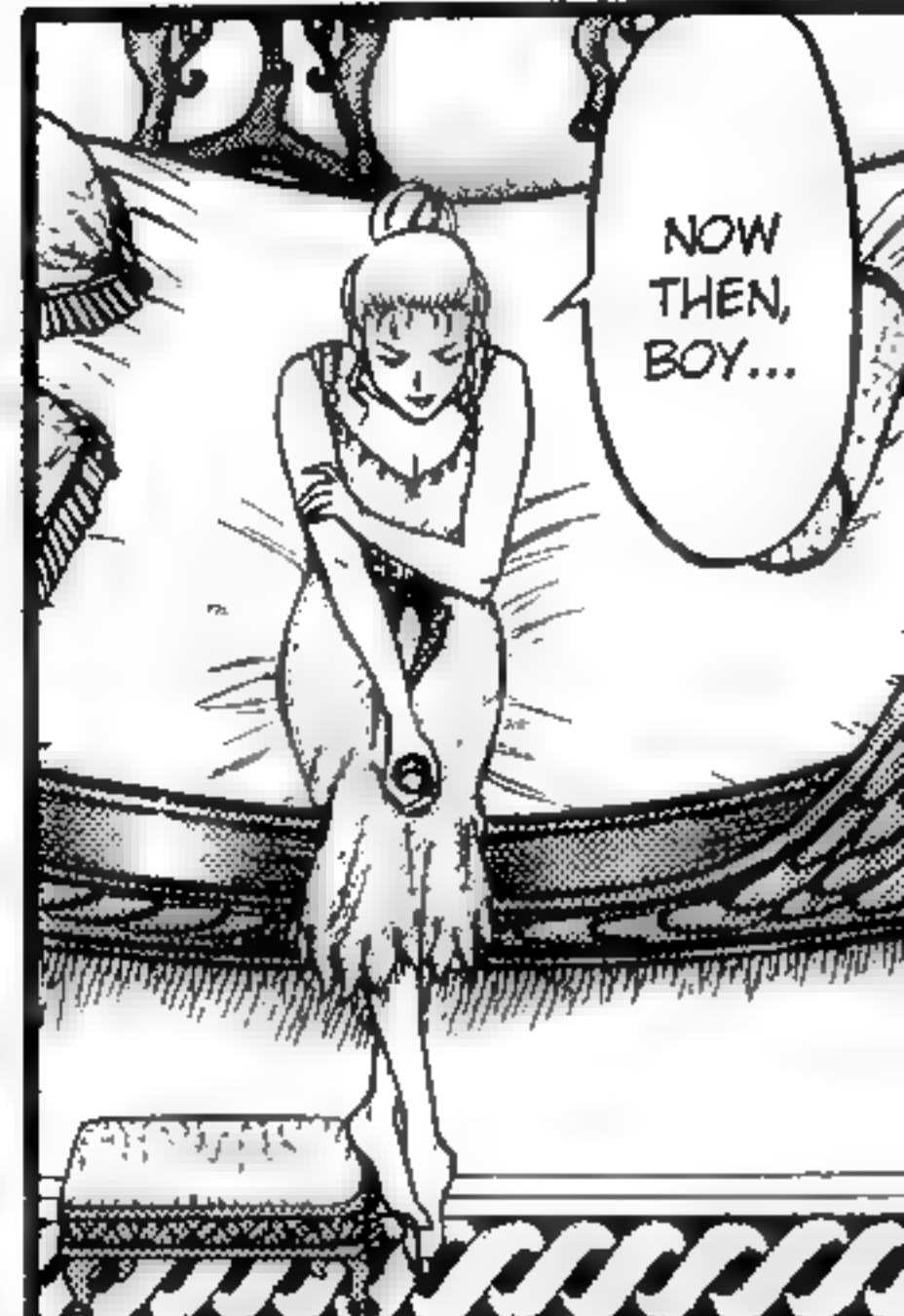
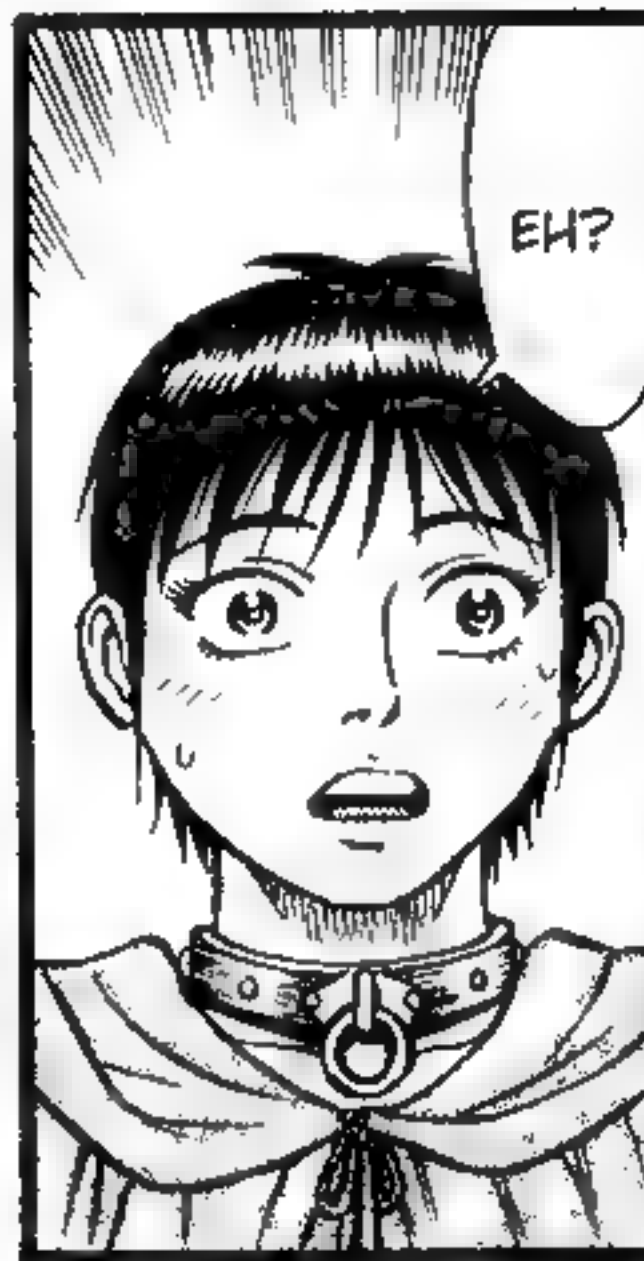
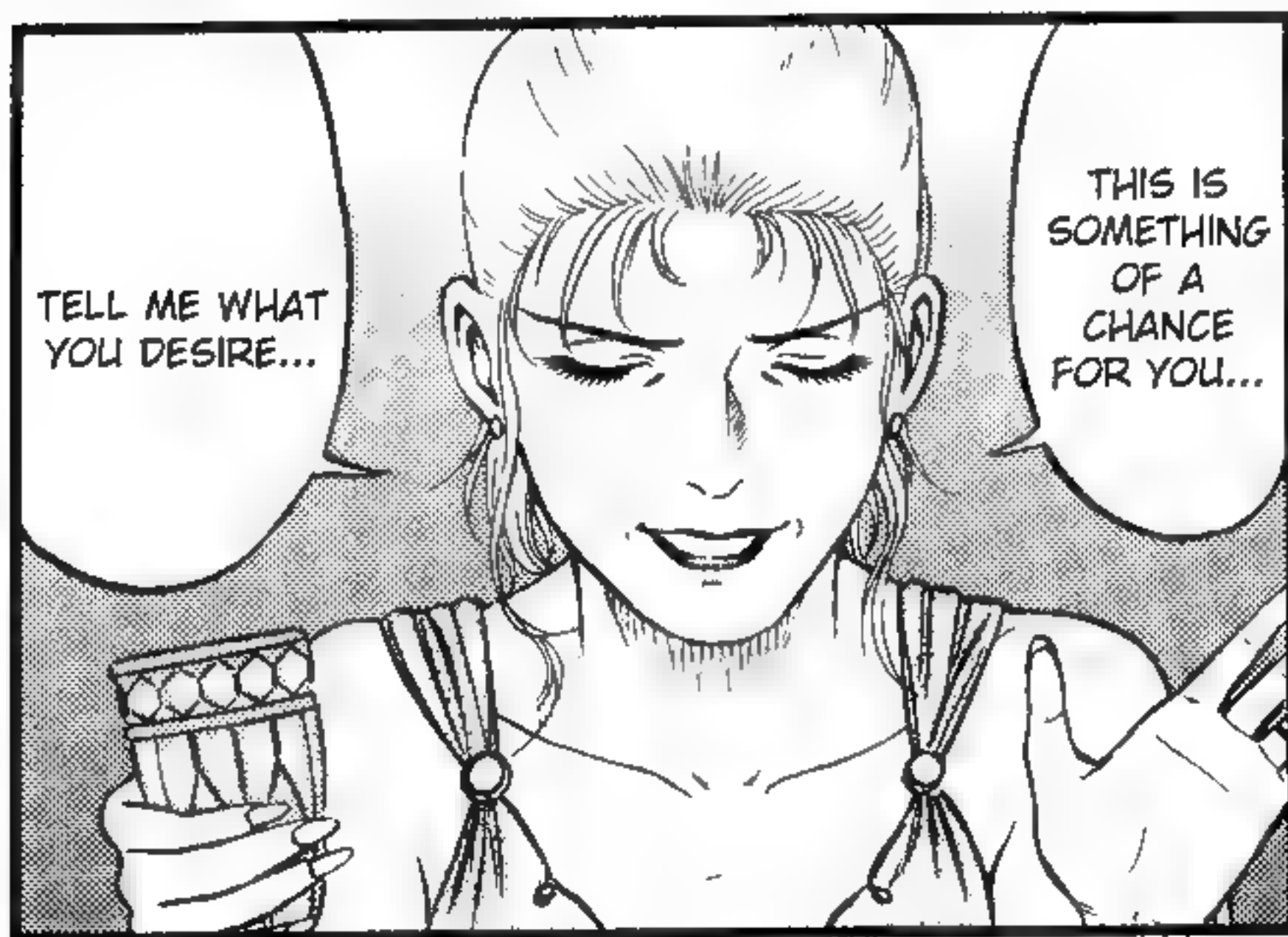
TO BE THE
LEADER OF
A GREAT
NATION...

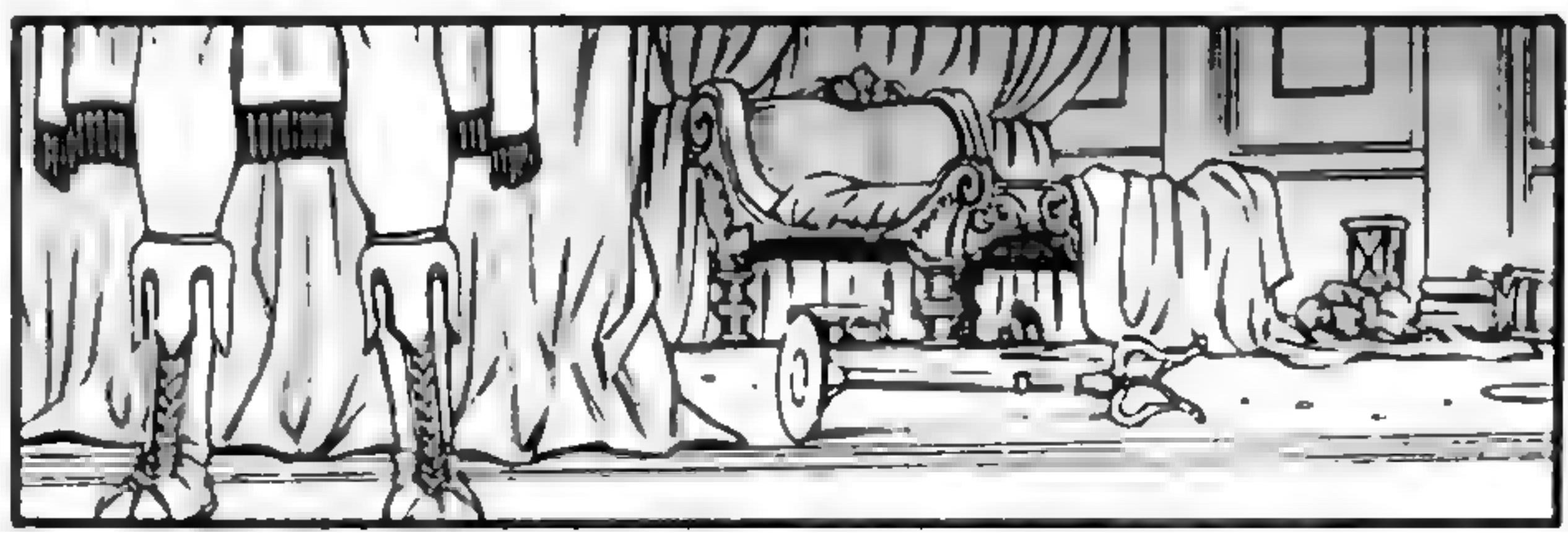
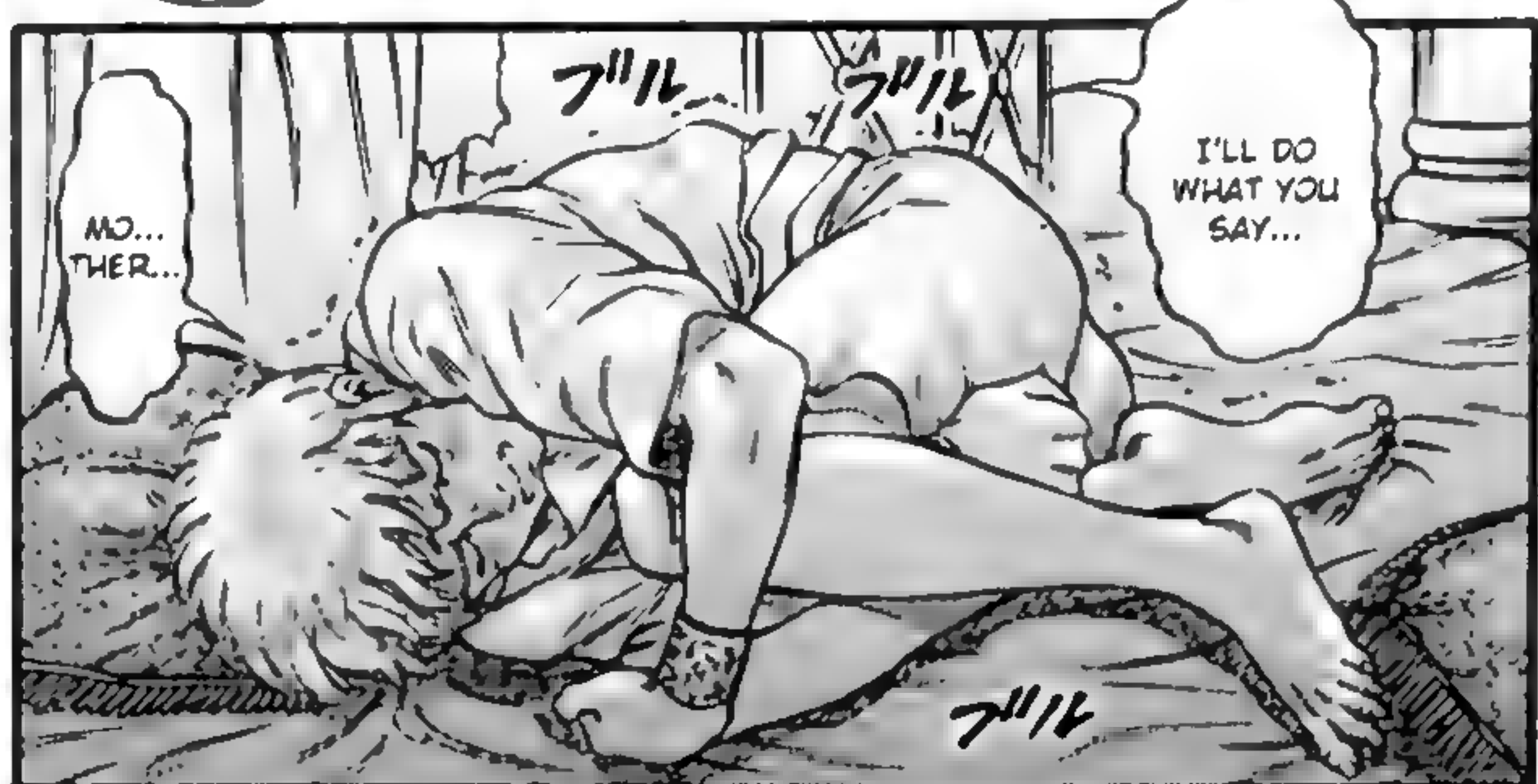
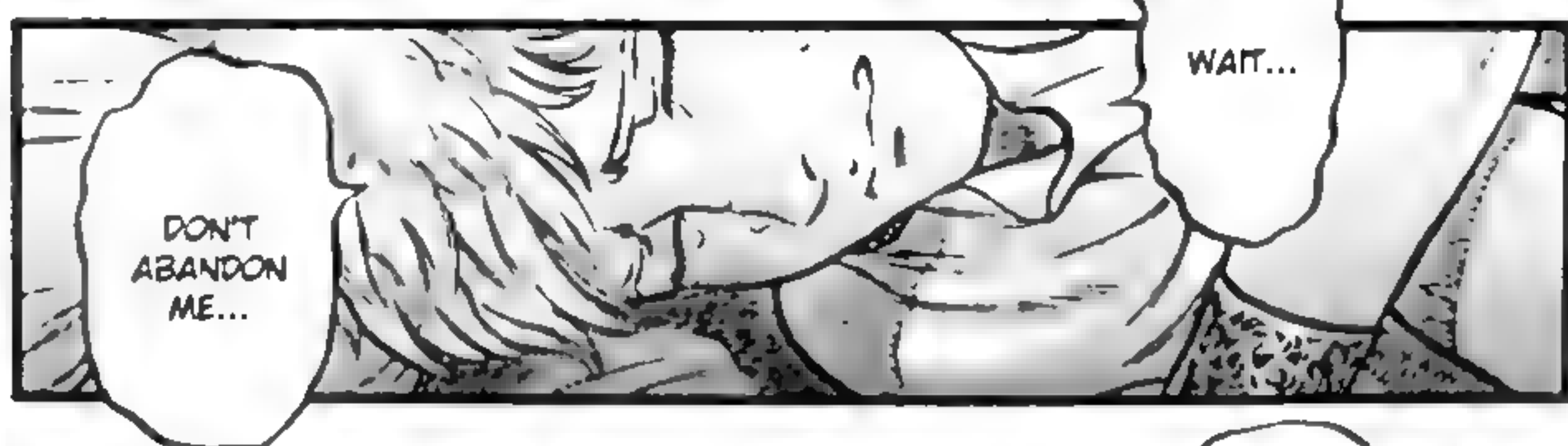
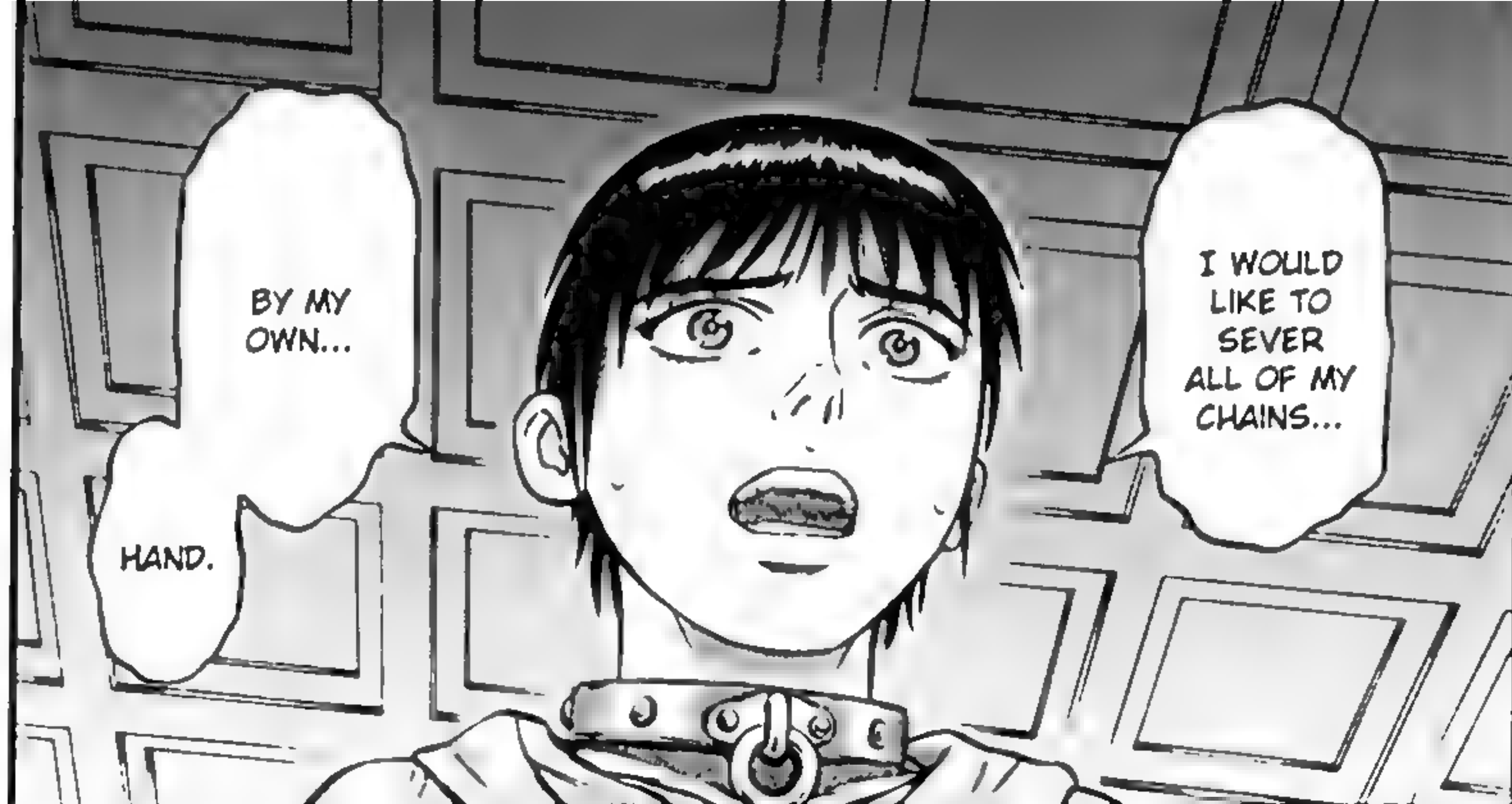
WENT WRONG
RAISING HIM
SOMEWHERE...

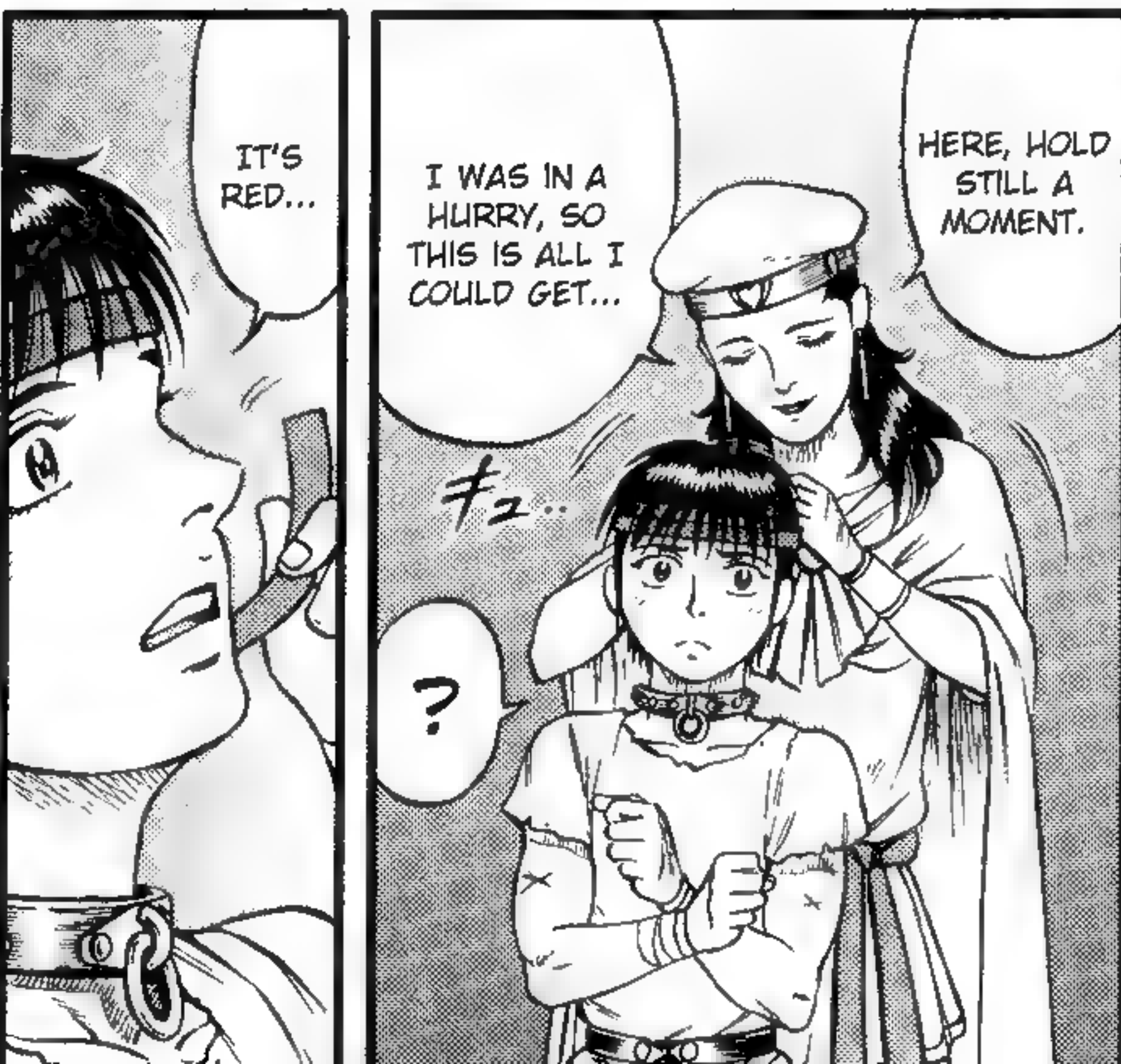
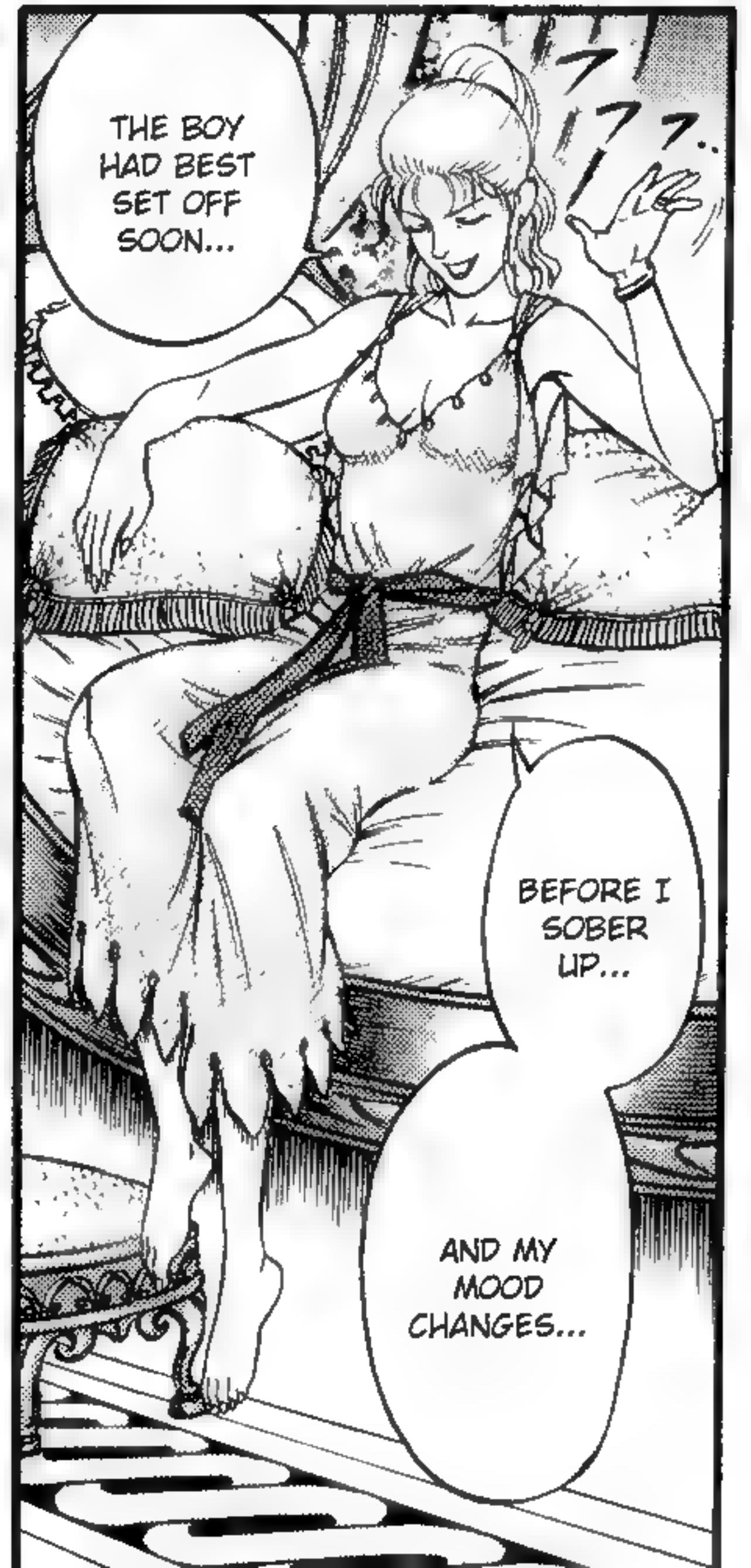
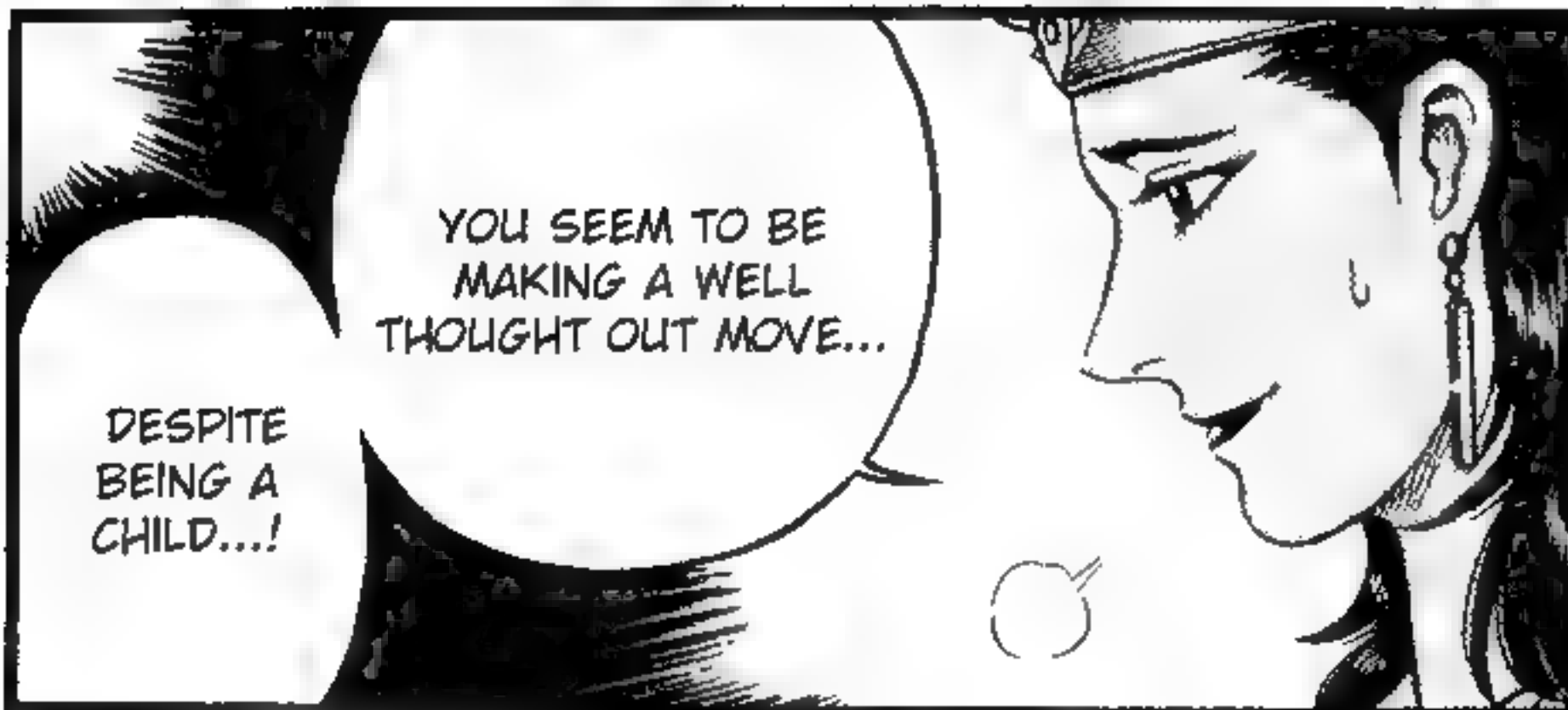
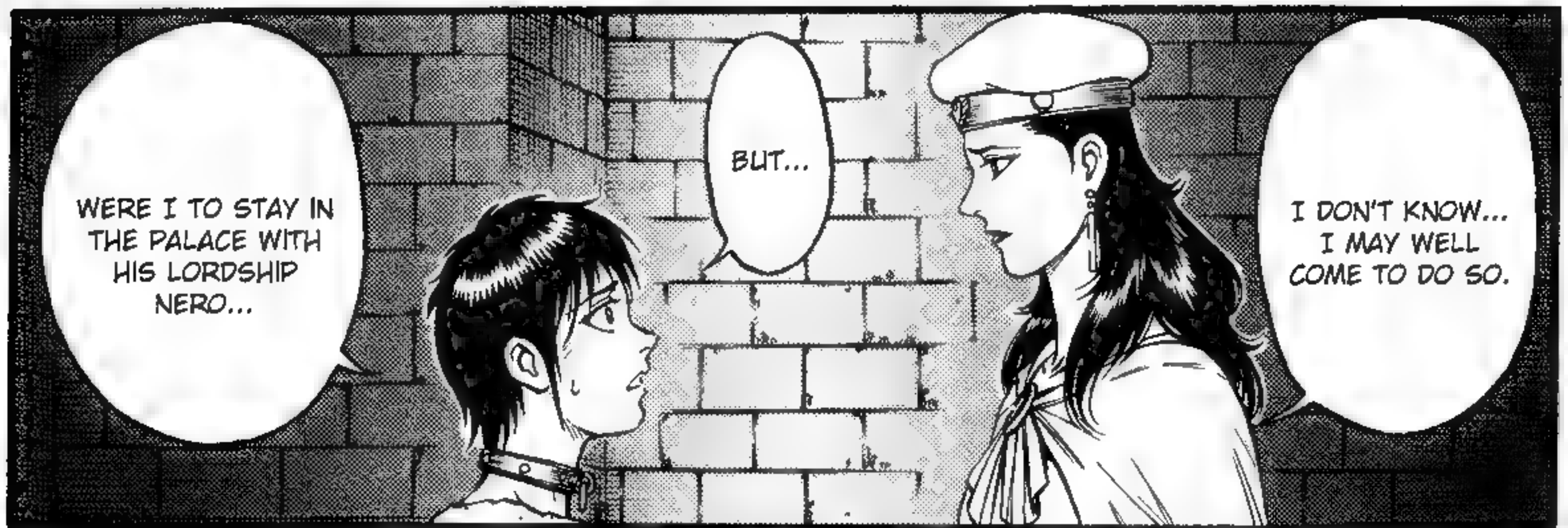
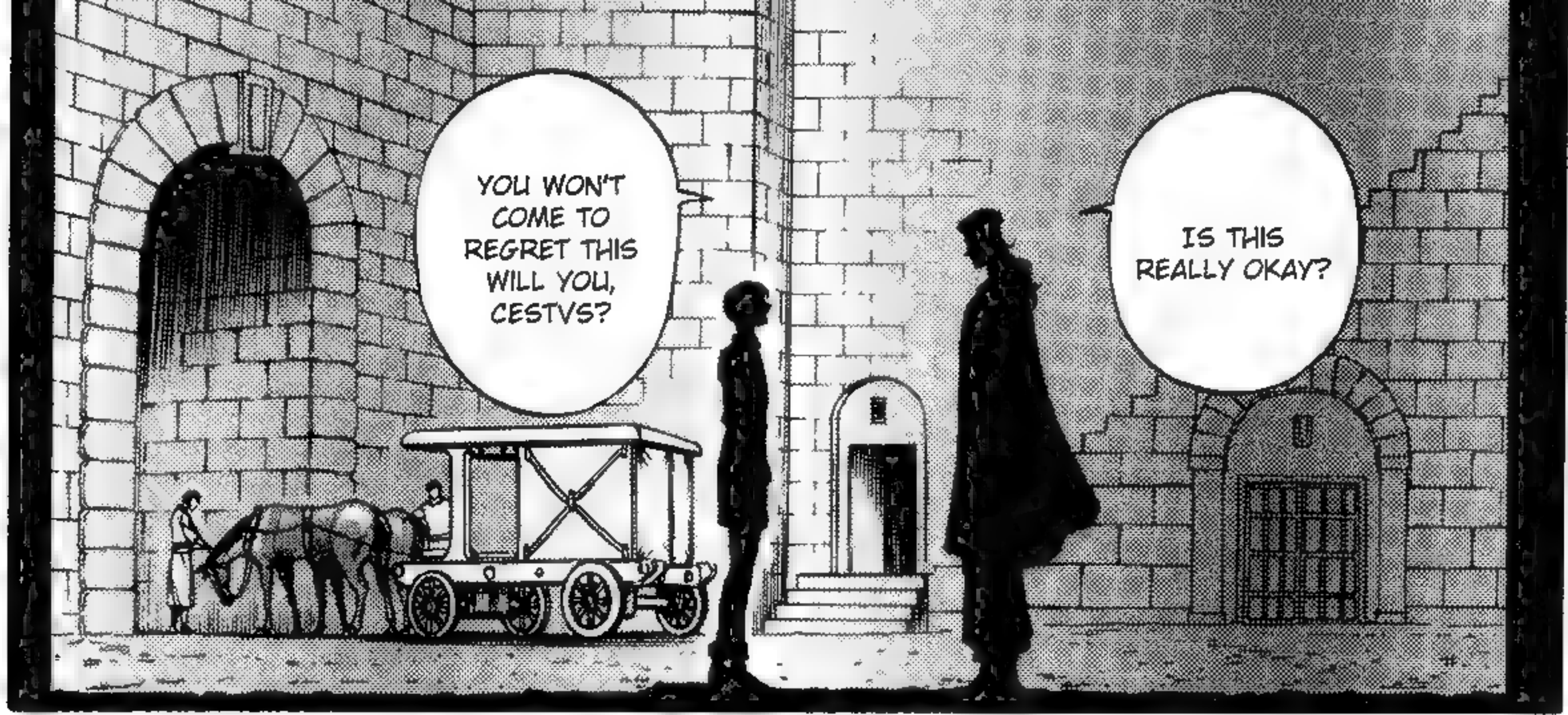
I
PROB-
ABLY...

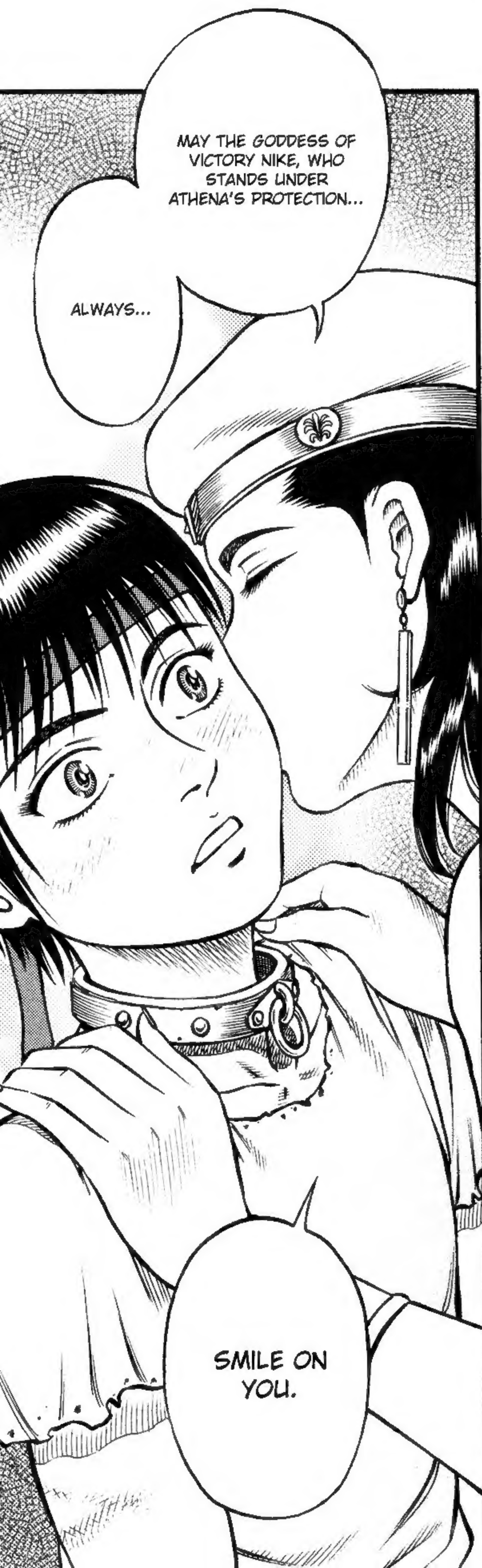












MAY THE GODDESS OF
VICTORY NIKE, WHO
STANDS UNDER
ATHENA'S PROTECTION...

ALWAYS...

SMILE ON
YOU.



I HOPE IT
WILL SERVE
AS A
PROTECTIVE
CHARM.

MM! IT
SUITS YOU.

IT'S A
RIBBON
OF
VICTORY.

IT WAS GIVEN OUT
AT THE GAMES AT
OLYMPIA TO THE
WINNERS ALONE AS
PROOF OF THEIR
VICTORY.



♪♫

IT'S
BECAUSE
I LIKE
YOU.

NOW
THEN...



ALWAYS SO
KIND TO ME
ROXXANE?

WHY ARE
YOU...

いん..

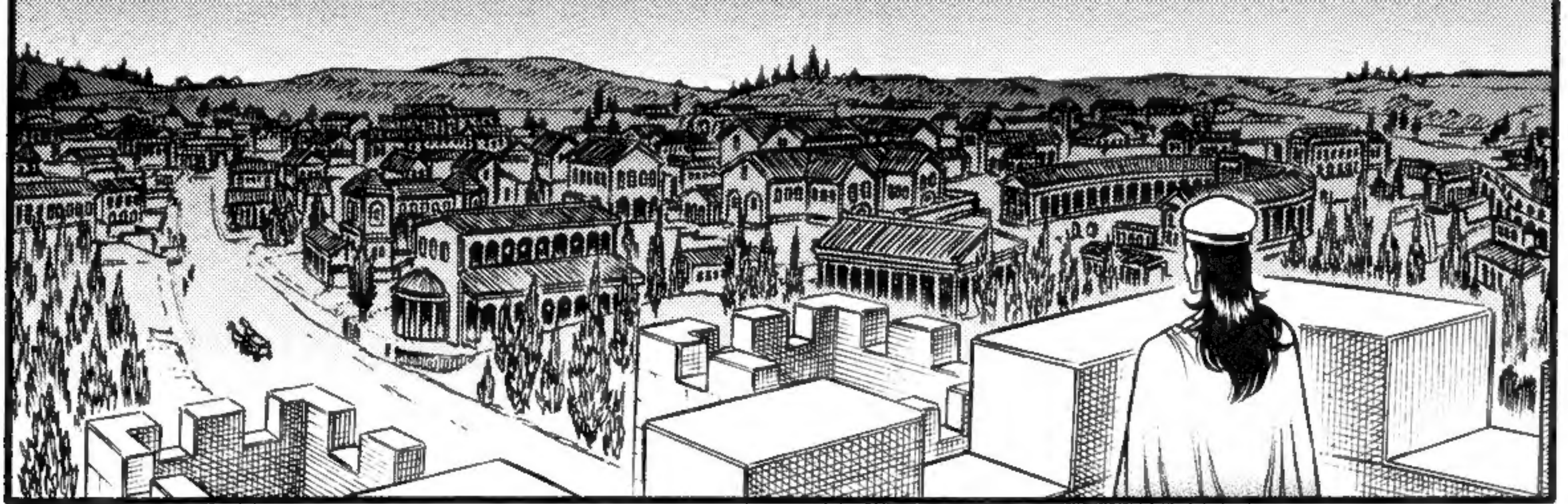


AND YOU'LL
STILL BE AS
CHEERFUL!

THAT WE'LL
MEET ONCE
MORE...

RATHER THAN
BIDDING
FAREWELL
MAKE ME A
PROMISE
CESTVS!

OF
COURSE!



HE CHOSE TO WIN
TRUE FREEDOM
AMIDST
SUFFERING...

SUCH IS
THAT BOY'S
PATH IN LIFE.

RATHER THAN
A TRANSIENT
FREEDOM
BOUND IN A
CAGE...

SO THE
BOY...

IS
GONE
THEN...

HE CAN'T SEE
ANY OTHER
WAY...

HE RESPECTS
HIS TEACHER
TOO MUCH.

HE'S A
PITABLE
CHILD.

TO KNOW
NOTHING
BUT THAT
PAINFUL
PATH.

I DON'T
KNOW
ABOUT
THAT.

I HOPE THAT THE
GAP BETWEEN
THEIR MAJESTY'S
HEARTS DOES NOT
DEEPEN.

STILL,
IT WILL BE
STORMY COME
TOMORROW
MORNING.



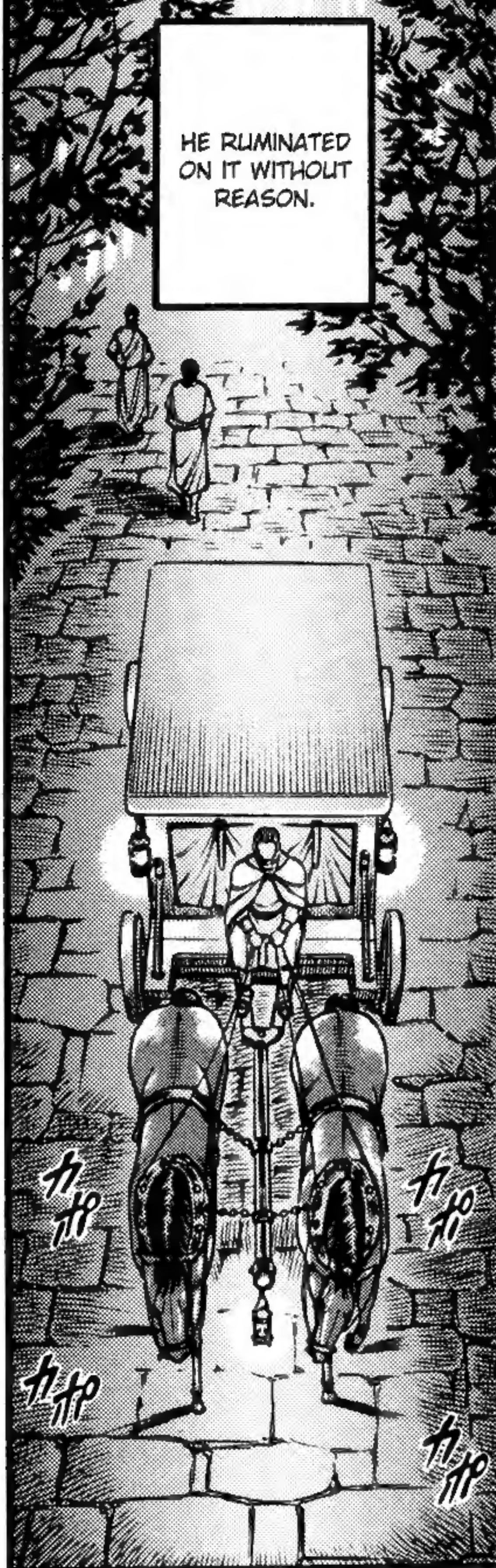
THAT
SORROWFUL
STATE OF
MOTHERHOOD
WHICH HE
SHOULD NOT
HAVE SEEN...

WHICH
HE HAD SO
UNEXPECTEDLY
COME FACE TO
FACE WITH...

IT EVOKED
IN HIM A
STRONG,
BITTER
FEELING...



IT WAS A
SCENE HE
COULD NOT
FORGET.



HE RUMINATED
ON IT WITHOUT
REASON.



MOTHER
EH...

A...



WAS THAT
TEARFUL FACE...

THE EMPRESS
DOWAGER'S
TRUE, BARE
APPEARANCE?

SHE HAD
BEEN A
FRAIL,
SOLITARY
MOTHER....

DRUNKENLY
SPEAKING
HER MIND.

BROUGHT HIM
NOSTALGIC
THOUGHTS.

CESTVS
DIDN'T KNOW
HIS MOTHER'S
NAME, BUT THE
LINGERING IMAGE
WHICH HE HAD
OF HER...



THIS
HOMESICKNESS
GRASPED HIS
HEART.

AND, FOR
JUST A
MOMENT...

HE FELT A FAINT
WARMTH THERE.



CHAPTER XXXVII: LINGERING IMAGE - END